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CHDS Celebrates "Five Years of Meeting the Homeland Security Challenge"

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CHDS Celebrates “Five Years of Meeting the Homeland Security Challenge”

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The Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) celebrated “Five Years of Meeting the Homeland Security Challenge” at their Annual Alumni Conference on Jan. 29-30. The Center is known as The Nation's Homeland Security Educator and offers the nation's first Master's Degree program for Homeland Security. The two day conference featured panel discussions and keynote addresses from senior homeland security and defense officials. More than 230 of the Center's Master's Degree and Executive Leadership Program alumni, partners, sponsors and stakeholders participated in the event. Ms. Lynda Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Personnel Policy, Department of the Navy, one of the Center's sponsors, welcomed the alumni and made opening comments.



The distinguished panelists included: Joseph Billy, Jr. Assistant Director, Counterterrorism, FBI; Dr. Donald Kerr, Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence; BG Christopher Miller, Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, U.S. NORTHCOM; David Paulison, FEMA Administrator, DHS; Robert Stephan, Assistant Secretary, Infrastructure Protection, DHS; Jack Tomarchio, Deputy Under Secretary for Operations, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, DHS; and Pete Verga, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense, DOD. CHDS alumni asked the panelists questions on a wide variety of topics including, intelligence and information sharing, border security, response operations and critical infrastructure protection.

The participants also attended breakout sessions addressing multi-discipline approaches to contemporary homeland security issues. Session topics included, Border Security, Intelligence and Information Sharing and Bridging the Gap of Public and Private Integration. White papers addressing these topics will be submitted for publication in the CHDS *Homeland Security Affairs* Journal (<http://www.hsaj.org>) in the next few months.

The first day's session concluded with an open-house highlighting the national impact the Centers' programs have had over the past five years. District Director Alec Arago, of Congressman Sam Farr's Office spoke on behalf of Congressman Sam Farr, and presented the Center with a framed copy of Farr's comments honoring the Center's 5th Anniversary in the proceedings of the 110th Congress, Second Session Congressional Record. FEMA Administrator Paulison (the Center's primary sponsor) and BG Miller from U.S. NORTHCOM both commented on the national impact the Center has made and the important role of the growing network of local, state and federal alumni from across the country.

The second day opened with an alumni business meeting during which the alumni board discussed plans to continue to formalize the CHDS alumni association and build capacity to take on special projects as a national think tank.

Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Administrator Kip Hawley, provided the keynote address to close the conference. CHDS alumni eagerly asked questions and even made suggestions to Hawley about how to make airport screenings more efficient, diverse, and reputable.

As CHDS celebrates its anniversary and past achievements, the future of the Center is as dynamic as the field of homeland security itself. We will “continue to remain flexible, agile, and open to change,” said CHDS Director, Glen Woodbury in his closing remarks, “remembering our most important component, quality.”

